



# Marriage Growth-Track

## Week 5 - Day 1

### Helpful or Hurtful words

by Brian and Susan Moore

*Fools show their annoyance at once, but the prudent overlook an insult...  
The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.  
Proverbs 12:16, 18*

Foolish? Annoyed? Reckless? Haven't we all been all of these at some point especially in times of conflict with our spouse? Doesn't it seem like disagreements with our spouse have a tendency to bring out our very worst with the person we're supposed to love the most? These verses make it pretty clear about the consequences of the foolish. This is what we see in these verses:

- Our words can be helpful or hurtful;
- The purpose and intent of our words is a conscious and personal decision;
- With God's help, we can demonstrate the patience to hold our words until we have considered their impact;
- Words can be the source of healing and an avenue of support when spoken with wisdom and not in haste

Words can do severe, sometimes irreparable damage—especially words spoken in the heat of the moment when we become more concerned with being heard than with actually hearing. Careless statements tossed about bring with them much regret. However, the things we say and how we say them, are oftentimes the truest indication of our deepest feelings.

Our words, quite simply, reflect our heart. They express our emotions and our ability (or lack thereof) to control them. They show the depth of our wisdom, maturity, and selflessness towards others. They can offer guidance in times of trouble or just as easily compound confusion to an already challenging situation.

The tone with which you speak (especially to your spouse) carries with it just as much importance as the words you speak. So does volume. One practice that is helpful in preventing discussions from rising to heated levels is to make it a practice for neither party to raise their voice towards the other in anger. Although it isn't always our first response to speak without raised voices (i.e. yelling), it can be mastered in a relatively

short time. All it takes is for one spouse to remember and to begin lowering his or her volume. It's the rare partner who won't recognize the calmer, quieter responses and work to lower his or her volume, too.

Beside ratcheting down the emotions and the perceived anger, it also typically shortens the length of time it takes to resolve a conflict and that's a win-win all around.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How is your character revealed in the words that you use?
2. What consequences can the words you use have?

**Action Step:**

"Stop and Think" before you act or say something that you will regret later. Pray that God gives you wisdom to control your response so you can act honorably when trying situations arise.

**Prayer:**

*Gracious and compassionate Heavenly Father, as we struggle with communication, we seek your guidance and wisdom. We thank you for your never-ending patience with our shortcomings. We ask your Holy Spirit to direct and guide us in showing our spouse the same patience as we work through the conflicts that are part of married life.*